

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Withdrawn) An e-business complex comprising:

a plurality of electronically accessible e-business complex management services configured to handle e-business processing in the e-business complex on behalf of electronically associated virtual store operators, vendors, business partners and professional services providers;

a virtual management office configured to coordinate e-business transactions between said associated virtual store operators, said on-line shoppers, said vendors, said business partners, and said professional services providers in the e-business complex; and,

a plurality of e-business complex management services requesters configured to remotely invoke selected ones of said electronically accessible e-business complex management services, each said e-business complex management services requester invoking said selected ones of said electronically accessible e-business complex management services on behalf of one of said associated virtual store operators, vendors, business partners and professional services providers.

2. (Withdrawn) The e-business complex of claim 1, wherein the e-business complex further comprises:

a complex entrance through which virtual stores in the e-business complex can be accessed by on-line shoppers;

a programmatic extension to at least one of said e-business complex management services requesters, said extension providing a query interface to products offered for sale by an associated store operator in a corresponding one of said virtual stores; and,

a browsable catalog subsystem configured to provide access to said on-line shoppers to browse products specified by said query interface.

3. (Withdrawn) The e-business complex of claim 1, wherein the e-business complex further comprises:

a programmatic extension to at least one of said e-business complex management services requesters, said extension providing a real-time order processing service for processing orders in real time which are received from said management office.

4. (Original) A method of cooperatively processing e-business transactions in an e-business complex comprising the steps of:

registering a plurality of virtual store operators with the e-business complex, each said registration establishing a virtual store in the e-business complex;

providing to individual ones of on-line shoppers in the e-business complex, window displays of products offered for sale by virtual stores in the e-business complex, and accepting shopper orders for said products from said individual on-line shoppers;

notifying selected store operators of said shopper orders, said selected store operators operating virtual stores in the e-business complex which correspond to said products ordered by said on-line shoppers;

notifying selected vendors of said shopper orders, said selected vendors supplying said products offered for sale by said selected store operators;

fulfilling said shopper orders with said products supplied by said selected vendors; and,

collecting payments for said shopper orders from said on-line shoppers and distributing portions of said payments to each of said vendors and said store operators.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:
providing to said store operators a catalog of professional services offered for sale by
associated professional services providers; and,
brokering at least one transaction for at least one of said professional services between at
least one of said store operators and at least one of said professional service providers.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said fulfilling step comprises the
step of:
notifying said selected vendors of said shopper orders wherein each said shopper order
specifies products supplied by said selected vendors;
producing shipping and handling labels for each of said specified products; and,
forwarding said shipping and handling labels to said selected vendors only when said
selected vendors are ready to ship all of said specified products.

7. (Original) The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:
brokering tax and accounting services between a tax and accounting business partner and
individual ones of said store operators; and,
forwarding tax and accounting statements produced by said business partner to said
individual ones of said store operators.

8. (Original) A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer
program for cooperatively processing e-business transactions in an e-business complex, said

computer program comprising a routine set of instructions for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

registering a plurality of virtual store operators with the e-business complex, each said registration establishing a virtual store in the e-business complex;

providing to individual ones of on-line shoppers in the e-business complex, window displays of products offered for sale by virtual stores in the e-business complex, and accepting shopper orders for said products from said individual on-line shoppers;

notifying selected store operators of said shopper orders, said selected store operators operating virtual stores in the e-business complex which correspond to said products ordered by said on-line shoppers;

notifying selected vendors of said shopper orders, said selected vendors supplying said products offered for sale by said selected store operators;

fulfilling said shopper orders with said products supplied by said selected vendors; and,

collecting payments for said shopper orders from said on-line shoppers and distributing portions of said payments to each of said vendors and said store operators.

9. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

providing to said store operators a catalog of professional services offered for sale by associated professional services providers; and,

brokering at least one transaction for at least one of said professional services between at least one of said store operators and at least one of said professional service providers.

10. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 8, wherein said fulfilling step comprises the step of:

notifying said selected vendors of said shopper orders wherein each said shopper order specifies products supplied by said selected vendors;

producing shipping and handling labels for each of said specified products; and,

forwarding said shipping and handling labels to said selected vendors only when said selected vendors are ready to ship all of said specified products.

11. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

brokering tax and accounting services between a tax and accounting business partner and individual ones of said store operators; and,

forwarding tax and accounting statements produced by said business partner to said individual ones of said store operators.